

POSTAL DELAYS HIT THE SOCIETY

DELAYS in deliveries by the Post Office have brought widespread chaos and disruption to the work of The Spastics Society, with its reliance on the postal system for valuable fund-raising, and liaison between regions and headquarters. It is also likely that some disabled people are suffering very real hardship through being unable to obtain necessary allowances.

The Society's Social Work Department told Spastic News: 'First there was the Civil Service dispute which slowed things up and now this postal delay. It means applications for special allowances such as the mobility allowance and attendance allowance are being held up. After the backlog of post is cleared, I am sure that we will hear stories of desperate hardship.'

The Society's Appeals Projects Officer, Barry Norman, said: 'We send out 300 letters a week last thing on Friday by second class mail and expect them to be delivered round about the Monday or Tuesday. Goodness knows how long it will take for them to be delivered now—I have only just received a letter posted in Bristol three weeks ago.'

Nina Heycock, organiser of the Society's Literary Contest, had days of worry before the prizegiving in London on June 27. She said: 'I spent my whole time on the phone because I had sent rail tickets to the prizewinners and they were simply not receiving them. A winner in Newcastle only received tickets late on Monday—and they had to travel first thing Tuesday morning.'

'To make it worse, there has been a mail strike in Ireland and Christopher Nolan, one of the winners, lives in Dublin. In the end Aer Lingus, the Irish air-

A letter which did arrive...

MAGA Maczek, who attends the New Trinity Centre for Spastics in Edinburgh has received a letter from a fellow countryman Pope John Paul II.

Maga, who is the daughter of a Polish army officer, wrote in her native language to the Pope, telling him of her parents' escape across Nazi Europe during the Second World War, and also something of her present life in Scotland.

Pope Paul John II replied with a letter which Maga says she will cherish for the rest of her life.

line, came to our aid, with their Dublin office making all the arrangements, and an Aer Lingus Escort brought Christopher right

Cont. on Page 7



● Christopher and his mother.

Christie's winning ways with words

IT took two hours to revive Christopher Nolan when he was born, for he was asphyxiated at birth. 'I always knew he would be brain-damaged because of that,' said his mother Bernadette, from Dublin, 'but I also knew he was very intelligent. It wasn't until he began writing though, that we discovered how gifted he really is — the compulsion to write and the profundity of his thoughts — then I felt frightened.'

It is the second year running that Christie, as his family calls him, has received an award at the literary contest run by The Spastics Society for handicapped people.

Mrs Nolan has found that Christie has changed from a fun-loving tease with a mischievous sense of humour to a deeply thoughtful and sensitive observer of life since he started to write. Mrs Nolan holds his chin with her hand to enable him to type with a pointer strapped to his head — 'nothing will replace the human hand to help him,' she said. Her dearest ambition is to take Christie abroad, because he desperately wants to travel.

More about the Society's ninth annual literary contest on page 7.

A party, a family, a 'fantastic' day —and Spastics News shares the fun



● ALL set for a day out at the Great Children's Party in Hyde Park. Spastics News spent the day with the Cokayne family from Derby, and you can see our picture report on what they voted a 'fantastic' day on page 3.

Reporter: Nancy Tuft, Photographer: Mike Abrahams

FAMILIES from local groups all over the country received invitations to the Great Children's Party in London's Hyde Park, held to celebrate the International Year of the Child, and what's more non-handicapped brothers and sisters got invitations, too, so it really was a day out to remember for the whole family.

Both the Society's Family Centre in Fitzroy Square and Ingfield Manor School in Sussex provided overnight accommodation for families from outside London, and British Rail provided free travel.

As well as the circus and other children's entertainments including the biggest jelly and the longest sausage in the world, there was space too for voluntary organisations like The Spastics Society to publicise their work. The Education Department had an exhibition tent with a display of art and craft work by children and teenagers from the Society's schools and colleges. Young visitors to the display received a free balloon, a 'Save a Baby' badge and a sticker.

The Stars Organisation for Spastics was involved in the Great Children's Party, too, joining the grand party finale in the Rank arena with a 'Sing Song along with stars.'

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Incredible Croydon!

RECORDS went through the roof in this year's house to house collection by the Croydon, Sutton and District Spastics Society, when £11,700 was collected — an increase of over £3,000 on last year's record of £8,300.

Chief organiser, Mrs Alice Hoy, had hoped to reach the £10,000

mark, and is understandably thrilled with the target being beaten by such a margin.

One factor in the success was a substantial increase in the number of collectors in the Sutton area, under the direction of a local business man.

Said Press officer John Eve, 'This is a tremendous result, and is a great tribute to the

unflagging enthusiasm of over 1,000 voluntary collectors, many of whom have been out knocking on doors for us for many years. Without fail, they come up trumps with a new record each year. It is quite astonishing.'

'It is also, of course, a tribute to the people of Croydon and Sutton, who continue to support us so generously.'

BMA call for more 'sympathy'

THE plea for more sympathetic care of pregnant women voiced in The Spastics Society's new film 'Feeling Special' has been echoed by obstetrician and gynaecologist Dame Josephine Barnes in her presidential address to the British Medical Association.

It should be possible to treat expectant mothers better than by 'herding' them into clinics where they had to wait up to three hours to see a junior doctor for only two minutes, Dame Josephine told the BMA meeting in Liverpool.

A woman having her first baby needed advice, reassurance and help more than at any other time. But it was sometimes very difficult to get counselling from doctors.

Efficient appointment systems plus family doctors could help to reduce the pressure on clinics, Dame Josephine declared.

● Read about 'Feeling Special' on Page 4.

Goodbye Brooky

MISS Kathleen Brooker, or 'Brooky' as she has been known to whole generations of Thomas Delarue students, is retiring at the end of this term after 21 years service.

Miss Brooker, a much valued senior houseparent has been with the Thomas Delarue since September 1958 when the old school was still at Dene Park.

When a quick injection of ready cash can be a life-saver

'SPENDING the Society's money wisely and well' is how Mrs Christine Adey describes her role as chairman of both the Personal Services Fund and the Samaritan Fund.

The same committee of five people is responsible for dispensing money from both funds and they meet in London at intervals of six weeks to discuss the applications put before them. Although there is no means test and the confidentiality of the applicants is respected, the background behind each request is always carefully gone into.

'We like to make sure that people are getting their

due from statutory sources wherever possible. So we always see if the local authority or the Family Fund would be likely to help,' explains Mrs Adey.

Often a request for financial aid comes at a time of family crisis and each year the Samaritan Fund provides an enormous number of much needed quick injections of life-saving ready cash.

Training

The Personal Services Fund on the other hand, with fewer requests per year, tends to come to the aid of those people who are making rather more long term plans for the future, possibly to do with training for employment or with

further education. A recent application, for example, came from a disabled language student who wanted to spend a year in France, but whose grant would not cover the extra expenses involved in living in another country. The Personal Services Fund was able to make up the difference.

Circumstances which make people call on the Samaritan Fund include anything from a family being rehoused and finding themselves with unexpectedly high central heating costs, to a couple who have lived in a residential centre but now getting married with no capital to furnish and equip a home of their own.

Otherwise the people most likely to need help are very often those who just miss the extra provisions available for the severely handicapped. An example of this is the plight of people who fail to qualify for a mobility allowance, yet who have an obvious mobility problem.

'We encourage people who've been turned down for a grant or interest-free loan to purchase a car, there would have to be a genuine need,' Mrs Adey explains. In the case of an adult the qualifying reason would probably be to provide transport to work, or in a remote area, a car might be the only means of a child or teenager getting out.

Another increasing category of requests, besides cars, is that of building adaptations where very often the local authority will only provide part of the cost. Similarly the Fund will share the costs of a holiday, possibly with a local group.

Clothing, shoe repairs and bedding are perennial headaches, especially now with increased VAT.

According to Mrs Adey, it's a pity that more health and welfare workers and also local groups don't make more use of the Samaritan and the Personal Services Fund.

But individuals suffering from cerebral palsy or their families are always welcome to approach either trust direct, and all applications will be treated in confidence.

Write to them c/o The Spastics Society, Family Services Centre, 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1P 5HQ.

Thanet has a target

THANET Branch of The Spastics Society is hoping to raise £15,000 for a paediatric assessment unit to be built at Foreland School, Broadstairs, which will be open to all children suffering from any type of handicap. The Society will meet the initial cost and the group plan a series of money-making events to repay the sum.

Benefit increases from the Budget

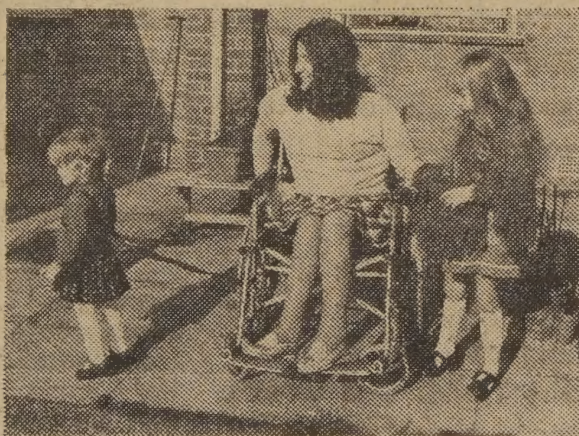
BENEFIT increases announced after the Budget by Social Services Secretary Patrick Jenkin include a rise in Maternity Allowance from £15.75 to £18.50. The Attendance Allowance will go up as follows: The high rate from £15.60 to £18.60; low rate £10.40 to £12.40. The non-contributory invalidity pension and invalid care allowance goes up from £11.70 to £14.

Mobility Allowance will go up from £10 to £12.

The new rates will be paid from November 12.

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● THE Spastics Society Family Centre in Fitzroy Square, London, provided overnight accommodation for families attending the Great Children's Party in Hyde Park. Judith and Bob Cokayne came from Derby along with their children, five-year-old Matthew, and his older brothers, Stephen, aged 12, and Robert, who is 10. It was off to an early start on the morning of the party with buggies and wheelchairs having to be loaded into the minibus.



● ABOVE: Jenny Hanley, ITV's Magpie presenter, spared a moment to say a special hello to the party from The Spastics Society before doing a television interview with one of the many entertainers at the Great Children's Party.

● BELOW: Break for lunch in The Spastic Society minibus which took the families to the party. The sandwiches, thoughtfully prepared by the staff at the Fitzroy Square centre, were much appreciated after a busy fun-packed morning in the fresh air.



The day we all went to the party



● MATTHEW'S favourite circus act was the elephants! But he also enjoyed the antics of Pedro the comedy clown and his crazy car which sprayed the audience of handicapped children with water from the bonnet. 'He loved it when the car doors fell off,' said Mrs Cokayne. 'But he did find the bangs a bit loud.'



● ABOVE: Everyone's eyes are turned skywards as the Red Devils Parachute Team jump from their helicopter circling above the arena.

● RIGHT: So much to do, so much to see, and all in one day. What next? Pause for family discussion as the Cokaynes decide on what to do next. Five-year-old Matthew, in the buggy clutching the balloon, and his brothers Robert and Stephen, were just three of the estimated 150,000 children present at the two-day Children's Party.



● SMOKEY the Clown from Gerry Cottle's circus says welcome to the show. Other clowns included the Loonies, acrobatic clowns dressed up as Spiderman, Popeye, Micky Mouse and Groucho. Barney the clown escorted the Queen when she paid a short visit to the circus tent at the end of the show, accompanied by Prince Phillip, who lingered for a little while chatting to the handicapped children in the audience.



● ENORMOUS landmark visible for miles around was this giant green inflatable of Kermit the frog, borrowed from the Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City. Kermit was just one of the hundreds of attractions along with military bands, puppets, dance groups and children's theatre groups.



The good, the bad, and the uncaring

Society's campaigning new film spotlights maternity services

CARE before birth in this country is often unattainable, inaccessible and wholly unattractive. That is the message of The Spastics Society's new film, 'Feeling Special,' which had its premiere at the Princess Anne Theatre, Piccadilly, London, in June.

The film, written and directed by Nigel Evans as part of The Spastics Society's 'Save a Baby' campaign, calls for urgent reforms in Britain's maternity services so as to stop the needless death and handicapping of babies.

The problem in Britain is that not enough mothers-to-be go to clinics early enough. Thirty per cent of women have not received any care by the 16th week of their pregnancy. In other countries the figure for late booking is only five per cent, and this is one of the reasons why Britain has a higher rate of infant death and handicap than most other advanced nations.

The infant death rate in this country is nearly five times higher in the children of mothers who are late in booking for the antenatal clinic than for those who book early.

Mothers interviewed in the film 'Feeling Special' recounted experiences in antenatal clinics which felt more like factories where they were being processed. They sometimes had to wait up to three hours to be seen by a doctor, with



A SCENE from the film: A midwife checks the blood pressure of a young mother who, despite being seven months pregnant still has not been for an ante-natal check-up. With four children already to look after, and little money, this mother needs the kind of aid given by the community midwife visiting her.

whom there was no communication and no personal contact.

'I think too much emphasis has been placed upon an efficient system rather than preserving the dignity and individuality of the mother seeking maternity care,' comments Professor Peter Huntingford in the film.

Too 'central'

As an example of a centralised service, convenient for administrators but not the consumers of the service, the film quotes Calderdale Area Health Authority. In spite of a brand new maternity unit in Halifax, which has an ante-natal clinic with the most up to date screening methods, Calderdale recently had one of the highest infant mortality

rates in Britain. By ploughing all its resources into one centralised unit, the authority had overlooked the basic problem of mothers, often with other young children, travelling to the clinic from the dozens of small towns, villages and housing estates strung out around the valleys surrounding Halifax.

As an example of good 'shared-care,' the film shows the Norton Medical Centre in the outskirts of Stockton on Tees, where the primary health care team includes GPs, a community midwife, a family planning sister, a marriage guidance counsellor, a social worker, and District Nurses. The team is able to adjust to the individual social needs of women and their families and recognises that the pregnancies

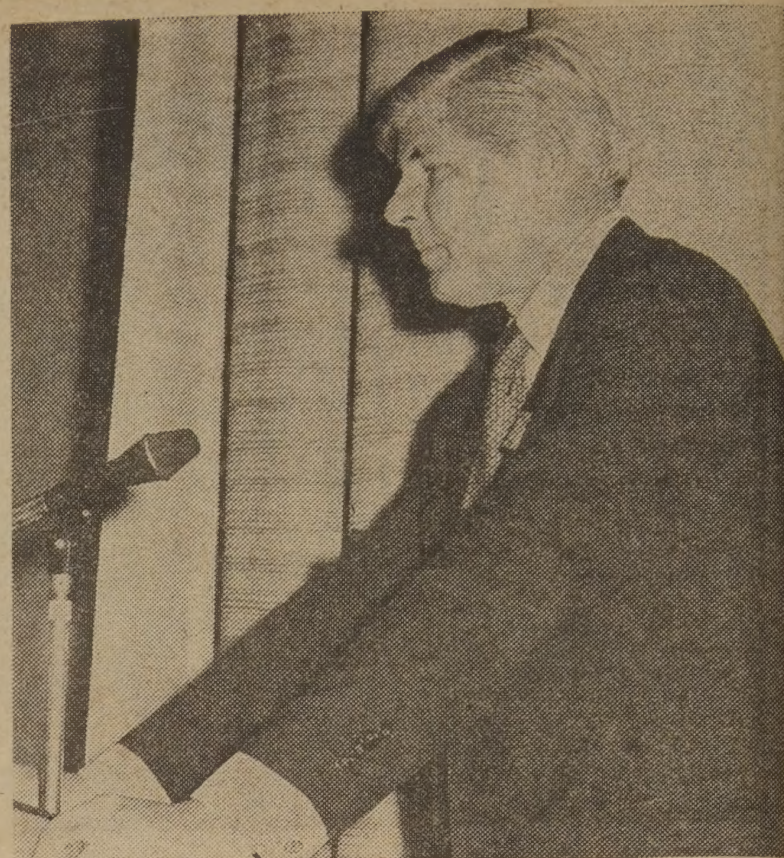
that are at risk are often those of the mothers who do not attend the antenatal clinic.

James Loring, Director of The Spastics Society, told the audience at the premiere of 'Feeling Special': 'We have made this film to draw attention to the deficiencies in Britain's system of care before birth.'

'Impersonal'

'Many antenatal clinics are far too impersonal, are often sited in places which busy mothers or working women find impossible to get to and, furthermore, the waiting times are often so long that women are thoroughly discouraged from attending.'

'What is needed is a ser-



MR Dorrien Belson, Chairman of The Spastics Society, introducing 'Feeling Special' said: 'Statistics from Scandinavia, Japan and France have shown that their incidence of cerebral palsy has already fallen because their standard of perinatal care is better than ours. This film is a further attempt by the Society to create an awareness of what can be done — we hope it will be successful and have far-reaching effects'.

vice that is geared to the needs of the average woman. Every clinic should provide practical help for women with problems, an appointment system to avoid excessive waiting,

more convenient opening times in the evenings and at weekends, child minding facilities, and encouragement to fathers to share in the experience of pregnancy and childbirth'.



PROFESSOR Herbert Brandt, of University College Hospital, pictured with the Society's Director James Loring, said: 'Undoubtedly The Spastics Society is doing an enormously valuable job in bringing to the people of this country the facts about cerebral palsy. Women and their husbands must be fully aware of the importance of antenatal care, so that they can benefit from what is provided, and see that services are improved'.

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Visit to Nashville

SIX residents from The Spastics Society's Kyrle Park Centre, Tenbury Wells, went to the Nashville Fanfare, the Country Music Jamboree held in the US in June.

The trip was organised by Mike McQuade, who, when he's not working as an instructor at the centre, goes under the name of Mike Dalton, a lead vocalist with his own band, the MD Country Band who represented the West of England at the Country and Western Festival at Wembley in May.

In order to raise the funds for the Nashville trip, Mike organised a local country and western festival which brought in £2,500 in one evening. Altogether the residents raised £5,500 since March.

Praise at the premiere

SOME of the personalities at the premiere of 'Feeling Special,' and the Press conference which followed the screening of the film.



EILEEN Milnes, Executive Council member, congratulated the film makers on their work with 'Feeling Special' adding: 'Priority of Priorities, the previous film, was a serious one — this one has a touch of humour, and after all — at the end of the day, giving birth IS a natural experience'.



A CONTINGENT from the Natural Childbirth Trust, Rosaleen Mansfield, Valerie Leggatt, Sara Salmon and, centre front, the president, Lady Micklethwaite, who congratulated Professor Peter Huntingford, of The London Hospital, for his concern at preserving the dignity and individuality of mothers seeking maternity care. Lady Micklethwaite suggested that 'Feeling Special' should be shown to all medical students.



THE Rev Ronald Rose, secretary of the Hospital Chaplaincy Board of the Free Church Federal Council, said hospital chaplains

were deeply concerned about the need for personal relationships. 'This film may well help — The National Health Service should not be a factory process, but about families.'



PETER Mitchell, Catherine Boyd, Mary Holland, James Loring and the film maker Nigel Evans were kept busy at the successful Press launch of 'Feeling Special' answering questions from their backgrounds of specialised knowledge in the field of handicap and its prevention.

'Feeling special'

Booking

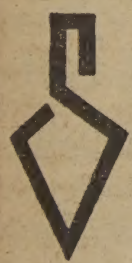
'Feeling Special' is available on free loan from Viscom Ltd, Park Hall Road Trading Estate, London SE21 8EL. Tel: 01-670 6161. Also from Concord Films Council Ltd, 201 Felixstowe Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 9BJ. Tel: 0473 76012.



ARTHUR and Margaret Wynn, authors of two surveys for the Foundation for Education and Research in Childbearing, were in the audience. Mr Wynn said: 'This is a splendid film. However, is it necessary for women to go to hospital — wouldn't it be better if a team went to the localities? In Bangor the ultra-sonic equipment is loaded into the back of a car and taken to 14 clinics. I have sympathy for the lack of obstetric facilities, but surely we should have clinics convenient to the women — it is possible to do it in this country'.

Mothers see 'priorities' film

THE Mothers and Young Children's Group of St Mark's Church, Dewsbury, Yorks, held an evening on behalf of The Spastics Society where Ian Croft of the North East regional office gave a talk and showed the film 'Priority of Priorities' to 100 people, and £170 was raised.



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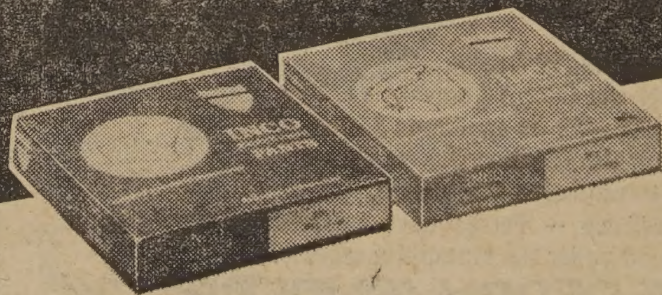
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What will happen when we can no longer cope at home?

Parents fight for the future



• MRS Floss Downs goes round to the corner shop accompanied by her 42-year-old son Terry. 'We've lived here on this estate for 30 years. Most people here know Terry and Terry knows everyone here — he grew up with them.'

The South East London Spastics Group, of which Mrs Downs is the newly elected chairman, is trying to persuade the local authority, Greenwich, to cater for the needs of the older physically handicapped, within the borough.

THE need for residential accommodation for severely handicapped adult sons and daughters when their parents can no longer cope is an issue of urgent concern to everyone within The Spastics Society.

Consideration is currently being given to the question of how local groups can best be helped when presenting their case to Social Services Departments and Housing Associations.

One local group, the South East London Spastics Group, formed 25 years ago, is already engaged in an active and vigorous campaign to seek public support in order to help persuade the local council,

Greenwich, to make suitable provision by way of long and short term accommodation within the borough.

Most of the members of the group have reached an age when they are feeling the strain of the constant wear and tear of caring, day after day, week after week, month after month. Yet even a short holiday once in a while is a luxury denied to them, let alone a break from responsibility when their own health occasionally breaks down.

With old folk

Last year for example when 64-year-old widow Mrs Floss Downs had to go to hospital, the only available local authority place for her 42-year-old son Terry was in an old people's home. Terry Downs has attended a local day centre since he was 30. His roots and his circle of friends are all in Greenwich. Mrs Downs, who is the newly elected chairman of the South East London group, often wonders what Terry's future will be when she is no longer there to cope.

'I desperately need the peace of mind in knowing that when I go Terry will be looked after properly, among his friends who are so important to him.'

Far away

Frequently the council's arrangements for older handicapped people involves sending them to places a distance away from Greenwich, making visiting an exhausting and costly business. If there was accommodation available in Greenwich itself, then obviously relatives and friends could visit regularly and local links with the community would not be severed.

'Many of the parents are old age pensioners with spastic dependents aged between 30 and 50, and they



• MR and Mrs Colin Bedwell live in a sixth floor flat in Woolwich along with their 26-year-old son Stephen, who is totally chairbound. 'We want to keep Stephen and care for him as long as possible, but what happens when we can't?' asks Mr Bedwell.

Pictures by Kentish Independent.

are concerned, naturally enough, about their future,' comments Mrs Lynne Waller, secretary of the South East London Spastics Group.

Mr and Mrs Colin Bedwell, also of the South East London Group, are also worried about the future of their 26-year-old son Stephen who is totally chairbound.

'So far we've been able to cope, but neither my wife nor I are getting any younger and soon we won't be able to manage. There is absolutely no provision in Greenwich for such a situation.'

'If anything did happen to us, Stephen could end up in a geriatric or mental home miles from here — cut off from his friends and the familiar things which make his life worth living,' said 49-year-old Mr Bedwell.

The group, which covers Greenwich and Lewisham, has already raised around £9,000 by various fund rais-

ing events. Ideally, members would like to build their own 20-bed residential home, but up till now the local council has shown great reluctance to even discuss the matter. They have been told that help towards the capital cost of such a project would be unlikely to be forthcoming.

There's nothing unique in the Greenwich story. In fact the experiences of Mrs Downs and the Bedwells are typical of parents all over the country.

Mrs Downs remembers a visiting American doctor saying to her way back in 1946: 'What is going to happen to these spastics when their parents can no longer look after them?' It's a question that no one has yet succeeded in answering.

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In memory of Caroline

POLICE Sergeant Donald Chidzey from Gloucestershire has been awarded the Caroline Symes Memorial Bowl for his work in aid of spastics and other disabled people. The Chief Constable for Gloucestershire, Mr Brian Weigh, who presented the award said that it was fitting that in this Year of the Child, the award should go to someone involved with the young.

Guests at the presentation included Mr and Mrs D. Symes, who instigated the award as a memorial to their daughter Caroline, who had been a young policewoman.

Job opportunity

DENE College, Shipbourne Road, Tonbridge, Kent. Administrative Assistant to Principal required to commence duties as soon as possible.

The appointed person will be responsible for all aspects of finance and budgetary control; the payment of salaries and wages (therefore a knowledge of PAYE, National Insurance and pension schemes is necessary); arranging employment schedules for domestic and ancillary staff and other matters as required by the Principal. Salary within NJC scale £3,732-£4,146 per annum inclusive (under review).

A three-bedroomed bungalow could be made available on a Licence to Occupy basis for which a moderate deduction from salary would be made.

Application forms available from: Mrs J. M. Pedler, Personnel Officer Schools and Centres, The Spastics Society, 12 Park Crescent, London, W1N 4EQ.

They wrote their way to prizes

A 13-YEAR-OLD spastic boy from Dublin who cannot speak, move or hold his head up, triumphed for the second time in The Spastics Society's annual literary contest with a special prize for an autobiography described as 'of exceptional and quite different quality, in the tradition of James Joyce, with overtones of Dylan Thomas.'

He is 13-year-old Christopher Nolan, of 158 Vernon Avenue, Clontarf, Dublin, and he received a special prize of £20.00 at the contest prizegiving held at the Society's Family Services and Assessment Centre, Fitzroy Square, London, on June 27.

The contest, which has sections for children, adolescents and adults, is open to people with all types of handicap.

The judges were: Lady Mary Wilson, wife of the former Prime Minister; Lady Georgina Coleridge, editor and consultant to IPC magazines; and Mr Ian Parsons, CBE, joint chairman of a well-known publishing group.

Christopher's mother, Mrs Bernadette Nolan, said that her son was unable to communicate with anyone, except by the expression in his eyes, until three years ago when he was put on a drug which enabled him to relax sufficiently to use a typewriter which he tapped with the aid of a beak attached to his head.

'That typewriter opened a new world for him,' she said. 'Since then we have had a flood of poems, essays and finally this autobiography. He has an amazing range of vocabulary, despite the fact that he cannot read much because he is unable to turn the pages. He has a love of words and listens with great concentration, which helps him in his writing.'

LADY Georgina Coleridge told Steven Simmonds, a 15-year-old student from Worcester College for the Blind, 'You must go on writing as you really have talent,' when she presented him with his first prize.

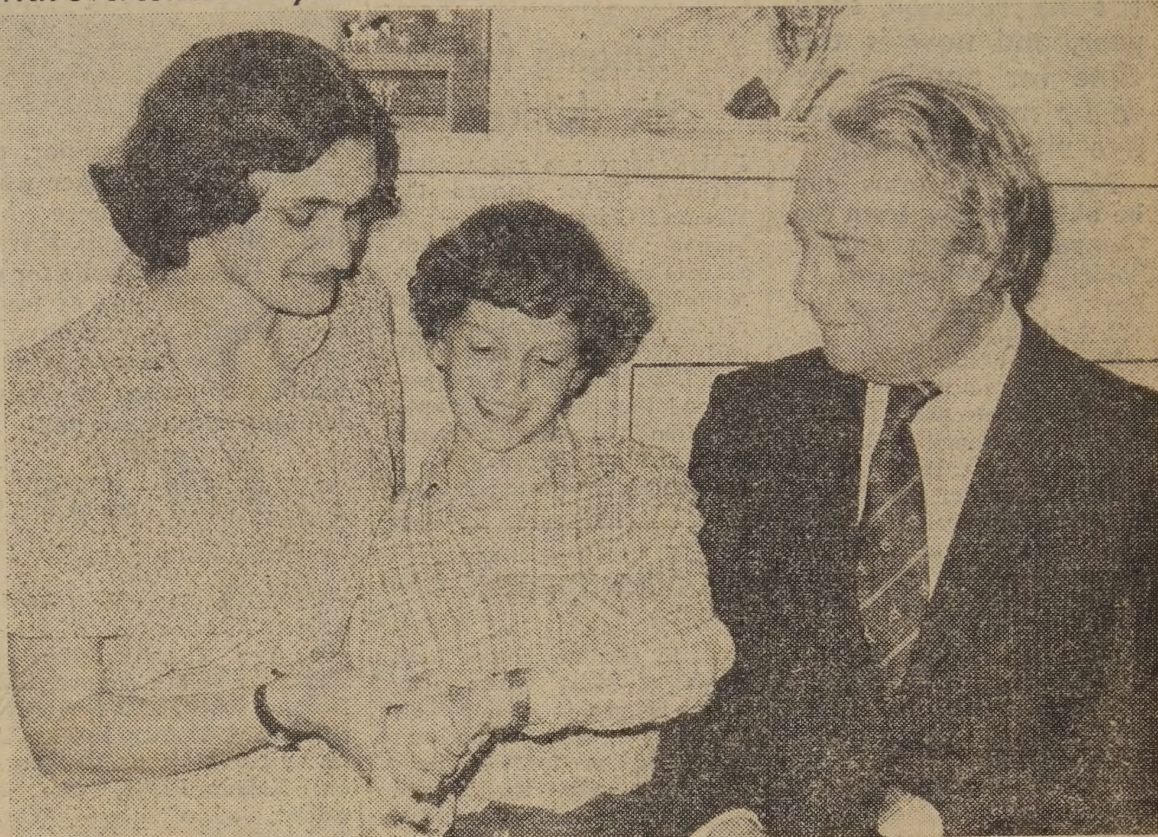


THE poetry section is Lady Wilson's chief delight to judge, although this year she judged the children's section as well. Here she presents Kevan Buckley with his first prize for poetry. Runner-up, Henry Wojdas, was unable to be present because of a music exam at the Society's Thomas Delarue School where he is a pupil.

● More pictures and full list of winners on page 8



ONE of the most pleasant tasks facing the two youngest prizewinners at the literary contest award ceremony came when the Society's Chairman, Dorrien Belson, called on them to present bouquets to the lady judges. In our picture, Lady Georgina Coleridge receives her flowers from Matthew Barber.



MATTHEW Barber was over the moon with his prize—a digital watch presented to him by James Loring as his special Director's prize. Matthew, who won with a poem, is pictured with his mother and the Director.

Postal delays hit the Society

Cont. from Page 1

up to the door of the Society's Centre in Fitzroy Square.

'They had given him VIP treatment with a visit to the Captain's cabin.'

The Society's Information Department expects to deal with hundreds of letters a week from all over the country, answering every kind of inquiry from help with school projects to vital inquiries from overseas. On one morning just one letter actually arrived, and urgent conference material could not be sent off because the letter requesting it arrived the day before the meeting—

having taken nearly three weeks to arrive.

The Stars Organisation for Spastics administrative assistant, Cherry Turner, said: 'We have had all the usual problems of arranging committee meetings and then not knowing who will arrive because we have not heard from them.' SOS Director Sheila Rawstone added: 'Really we have had to completely re-organise our system of doing things and it has put us to considerable expense because we have had to use telephones and taxis. It is not just the money but the time consumed ringing up, instead of sending a letter,

that counts as well.'

Particularly badly hit has been The Spastics Society's Regional Office in Birmingham where the Post Office took special security precautions against letter and parcel bombs.

As far as the everyday workings of the various policy-making committees was concerned, Mr Tony Diamond, secretary to The Spastics Society, commented that sometimes committee papers had not reached members in time for them to digest all the necessary information prior to a meeting.

Attendance at meetings had not been affected because dates were usually decided at the previous meeting, but agendas had not always arrived in time.

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Nominations for Executive Council seats

IT has been a year of elections, but the vital one as far as The Spastics Society is concerned comes on October 13, when at the Society's annual general meeting in London, delegates will vote for candidates seeking a place on the Executive Council.

Five members of the 15-strong Council retire by rotation each year, and now is the time for nominations to be made for those five vital vacancies.

Nomination forms can be obtained now from the Committee Secretary at the Society's headquarters, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

Members of the Society are entitled to nominate candidates for election to the Executive Council. Nomination form must be signed by three members of the Spastics Society. Members of the Society are designated as follows:

- Members of the Executive Council.
 - Ordinary or honorary life members.
 - Members of the Society's designated Special Committees.
 - The nominee member of each affiliated group.
 - The nominee member of each other society, association or organisation not being an affiliated group.
- Completed nomination forms

must be returned to the Secretary of the Society by August 15.

Singing for the children

FOUR years ago estate agent Richard Parker formed the Weston Chancellaires — a barber shop harmony club. Since then the 25 have harmonised so well that they have raised money without trying, and the Weston-Super-Mare and District Society for Spastic and Mentally Handicapped Children is to receive a cheque for £55.79 to buy more toys for the children's toy library.

Come-uppance!

A FUND-raising tale that is hard to swallow comes from Tenbury Wells where they really believe in getting their teeth into the tough business of getting cash for Kyre Park Spastics Centre. Bloody and unbowed, three contestants rose from their places at a sponsored eat-in, having downed 4lb of steak — however the fourth contestant got his come-uppance!

More literary contest prizewinners



TOM Gair, the author, deep in conversation with Ian Parsons, the publisher who gave him first place for his autobiographical piece. Mr Gair's work has appeared in the Daily Telegraph, Reville, Women's Weekly, and he says: 'When you write for papers and magazines you have a pretty good idea of what they are looking for, but in the competition you have no idea of what the judges are after.' Mr Parsons was obviously impressed with Mr Gair's work when he described: 'Moving, evocative, with humour and no self pity. Mr Gair writes extremely well.'

Full list of awards

Cont. from Page 7

WINNERS in the school-children's section were 11-year-old Ann Grange, who is spastic, of Priory Avenue, Old Harlow, Essex, with her essay entitled: 'A Holiday in Russia' (1st prize £10); and 10-year-old Elaine Reilly, who is spastic, of Cameron Way, Knightsbridge, Livingston, Scotland, with her essay entitled: 'When I went to London' (2nd prize £5.00).

Winners in the adolescents'

section were 15-year-old Steven Simmonds, of The Avenue, Kennington, Oxford, who is blind, who wrote: 'A descriptive article' (1st prize £20.00); and Kim Woolfe, aged 17, of Main Road, Hoo, near Rochester, Kent, who is spina bifida, with her essay, 'The Forgotten Land' (2nd prize £10.00).

Winners in the adult section were Tom Gair, who is spastic, aged 61, of Northumberland Cheshire Home, Matten Hall, Matten, Newcastle, with his article entitled 'Fifty Years Ago' (1st prize £30.00); and 56-year-old Gwen Hughes, of Danum Drive, Rotherham, who has Stills disease, for her essay: 'Match-makers' (2nd prize £15.00).

The Poetry section was won by 24-year-old Kevan Buckley, a muscular dystrophy victim, of Levens Drive, Brightmet, Bolton, Lancs, with 'Love is for all—a plea' (1st prize £20.00); and 16-year-old Henry Wojdas, of 5 Rowditch Avenue, Derby, who is spastic, with his French poem, 'Mes Amours' (2nd prize £10.00).

A special prize awarded by the Director of The Spastics Society, Mr James Loring, for the most outstanding runner-up, went to nine-year-old Matthew Barber, of Glebelands, Alkham, near Dover, Kent, for his poem 'Autumn.' Matthew is deaf and epileptic. His prize is a digital watch.



KIM Woolfe, aged 17, from Rochester, Kent, won second prize in the adolescents section with a story that her judge, Lady Georgina Coleridge, said was written with 'skill and talent.'

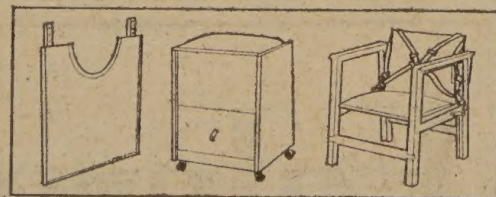


LADY Wilson thought Ann Grange's story of a Russian holiday was 'Very well written,' and gave her first prize in the children's prose section. Ann, who starts at the Society's Thomas Delarue School in September, plans to spend her prize money on a lasting memento—probably a clock, to take to school with her.

AT LAST! Safety seating for Spastics of all ages ... the SAFESEAT FROM TRECARN



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Kent loses dedicated volunteer

ONE of Kent's most respected and dedicated volunteers working for the relief of those suffering from cerebral palsy has died at the age of 81.

Mr Hugh Botting was Chairman of Maidstone Area Spastics Group since its formation in 1953 until 1969 and his memorial will be the Spastic Centre in Mote Road, Maidstone, which he worked so hard to achieve. He had a real concern for people and a desire that no one should feel left out, and people came from all over Kent to the centre for various treatments.

Mr Botting was loved and respected by all those who knew him.

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A letter from America...

AS editor of the United Cerebral Palsy Association's publication, the Crusader, I look forward to receiving my copy of your well-written and informative newspaper, Spastics News.

In the May issue, I noted the remarks from readers concerning appropriate language to use when referring to people with disabilities. And I look forward to seeing how you resolve this important issue.

As we have also had

problems in this area, I thought you might be interested in receiving one of the brochures on this subject that our organisation prepared and distributes. We have sent it to all major newspapers as well as to the public relations departments of all our affiliates.

WILLIAM NICOLAI,
United Cerebral Palsy
Associations Inc,
66 East 34th Street,
New York, USA.

...and advice on dealing with those 'swear words'

The brochure from Mr Nicolai is entitled 'Four-letter words in the dictionary of the disabled' and it begins:

'Four-letter words are offensive. So are some of the words used in referring to people with disabilities.

'Here are some of the "no-no's" pertaining to cerebral palsy (spasticity). The other ones we're sure you already know.

Some of the words which the organisation most dislikes:

AFFLICTED. — Very negative and a definite downer! Person who has or is affected by cerebral palsy is much better!

CEREBRAL PALSID. — Sounds like an inanimate object instead of a person. Why not people with cerebral palsy?

CP. — OK to describe the condition but NOT a person. This puts all people in a neat little package and deposits them in a file drawer. Please use who has cerebral palsy.

CRIPPLED. — This paints a mental picture no

one would look at. No alternative.

DISEASE. — Heavens no! Cerebral palsy is NOT a disease. People with cerebral palsy are as healthy as anybody else. Better to say condition.

DRAIN AND BURDEN. — We wouldn't touch these two words with a 10ft pole. Added responsibility is much more positive and receptive.

PATIENT. — Hospitals and doctors have patients. We deal in services. We have clients.

UNFORTUNATE. — What's unfortunate is that this word is part of our vocabulary. Don't offend with this one.

VICTIM. — A person with cerebral palsy was neither sabotaged nor necessarily in a plane, train or car crash. There's no way to re-phrase this turkey.

Finally, the brochure appeals for people working in the media to delete the 'swear words' from their vocabularies. If they did the public would follow suit, and would save people with cerebral palsy from sounding 'pitiful, inhuman or from being viewed as beings from outer space.'

'Protest to your MP'

I WOULD like Spastics News to ask parents and friends of spastics to write to their MPs about having to pay VAT on the equipment and the aids for the disabled. I wrote to my MP, and he quite agrees that VAT should not be charged on aids and the equipment. I think it would be worthwhile encouraging everyone interested in the disabled to write to their MPs or to the Minister for the Disabled Mr Reg Prentice.

MISS E. AGAR,
17 Madison Avenue,
Hodge Hill,
Birmingham.

The petrol crisis and the disabled

ALTHOUGH out of office, Mr Alf Morris, the Minister for the Handicapped under the Labour government, was quick to foresee a problem affecting disabled motorists, and tabled a question in the House of Commons in June asking what representations had been made in regard to the petrol shortage and the handicapped.

He was told by Mr Hamish Gray, Energy Minister, that the petrol shortage so far could be coped with by the public making economies. Mr Morris then asked what steps were being taken to ensure that the disabled had enough fuel oil and kerosene for heating and was assured that the Government would take direct action if the present shortfall, which was small, reached serious proportions.

Meanwhile, down in Cornwall, one of the worst affected areas in the country, the Society's Churchtown Farm Field Studies Centre at Lanlivery has been helped out by a friendly local garage.

The administrator, Bill Hall, explained: 'We have a big account with one local garage so during the weeks he was having to set a limit per car, he would give us our ration and then

a nod, and we would rejoin the queue again. It led to one or two embarrassing moments when other customers realised what was happening but we spend at least £250 a month with him and beside that, he wanted to help the handicapped.

'We have a fleet of six vehicles and every day at least four are out. I have been giving the drivers £10 each so they could top up if necessary and even with cutting down on petrol consumption £100 has been spent in this way in the last couple of months.'

Diesel

Up in Scotland the main problem has been diesel with the Scottish Council for Spastics having to restrict the use of big ambulances that run on the fuel. Bob Scott, the finance manager, said: 'The situation appears to be improving but it has been quite tight until the last week or so. We have had notice from the oil company that there will be a 10 per cent cut back on oil for heating, but I have every expectation that we will get a special allocation for schools and centres where it is essential that the temperature is maintained.'

Ted Rhodes, the Society's Agriculture Centre's general manager at Thorngrove, Gillingham, in Dorset, said: 'We have not been worried to any great extent so far. We have been able to get the petrol we need locally but travelling around presents a bit of a problem.'

'We are alright for the moment, generally speaking, but we are concerned about the future when it comes to supplies for heating the centre's greenhouses — but there is not a lot we can do about it at the moment.'

In Northern Ireland, Thelma Greeves of the Northern Ireland Council for Orthopaedic Development, said: 'I have checked with all the work centres and the young people who have to travel in, and so far they are all OK, but I understand that trouble is expected during the second and third week in July.'

Derek Lancaster-Gaye, the Society's Director of Resources, commented: 'Heating oil is proving the biggest problem at the moment and our research and development unit at Cheltenham has been waiting weeks for a delivery.'

Liz Cook

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News about the Spastics Pool



IT was a bingo session with a difference for Mrs Ivy Tree of Croydon and Mrs M. Ruddell of Upchurch near Sittingbourne, at the Top Rank Leisure Centre, Croydon. For the manager, Mr Scott, presented Ivy Tree with a cheque for £8,333 and Mrs Ruddell with a cheque for £1,000.

Ivy (67) of Addiscombe, Croydon, won a share of the first dividend and intends taking husband Fred on a holiday, and purchasing a colour TV set.

Mrs Ruddell won first prize in the lottery, promoted by The Spastics Society in support of its 'Save a Baby' campaign.

Picture shows Ivy receiving her first dividend cheque from Mr Scott.



MRS Doreen Rigg of Leeds, receiving a first dividend cheque for £25,000 from Yorkshire TV presenter Richard Whitely. And there was an added bonus of £1,250, which Doreen automatically received as an official collector for the Pool. First priority for Doreen's family, is to redecorate their home.

VAT rise and tax cut How the Budget affects charities

NICHOLAS Hinton, Director of the National Council of Social Service (the umbrella for charities) has deplored that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not taken the financial position of charities into consideration in his Budget.

He says that as a direct result of the reduction in the basic rate of taxation by 3% voluntary organisations in the UK would be £3m worse off despite the pledge to support charities stated in the Conservative Party Manifesto only a matter of weeks ago.

In addition, Mr Hinton has pointed out that the majority of the 126,000 charities in this country will be worse off as a result of the increase in VAT to 15%, which will increase the running costs and the cost of the services they provide.

Finally, Nicholas Hinton regretted that the Chancellor had not seen fit to relieve charities of Development Land Tax.

Before the Budget, the

NCSS drew the Chancellor's attention to the effects on charities of increasing VAT and lowering levels of tax in a letter to him on May 18, and requested him to agree to certain modifications in the covenant procedures which would have alleviated the impact of tax reductions.

Question in the House

MR Michael Welsh (Lab, Don Valley) asked the Chancellor in the Commons what was the amount of VAT paid by charities in the last financial year; what amount he estimated charities would have pay in VAT in a full year at the new rate of VAT announced in the Budget, and what effect the increase would have on the total amount of VAT paid by charities.

The Minister of State for the Treasury, Mr Peter Rees, replied that separate information for businesses registered as charities was not available, but in 1978-79 net payments of VAT from welfare and charitable services who were classified together for VAT were about £1 million.

It was estimated that with a rate of 15 per cent net payments would be about £24 million in a full year — about £1 million more than if the rate of VAT had not been changed by the Budget.

Artistic stars shine as fund raisers

THERE were some famous but unlikely artists names appearing in a catalogue issued by Phillips, the London firm of Fine Art Auctioneers.

For sale by auction at their Blenheim Street rooms were 80 lots, including a chalk drawing by Eric Morecambe which sold for £100, as well as doodles and cartoons by Bob Monkhouse and Max Bygraves.

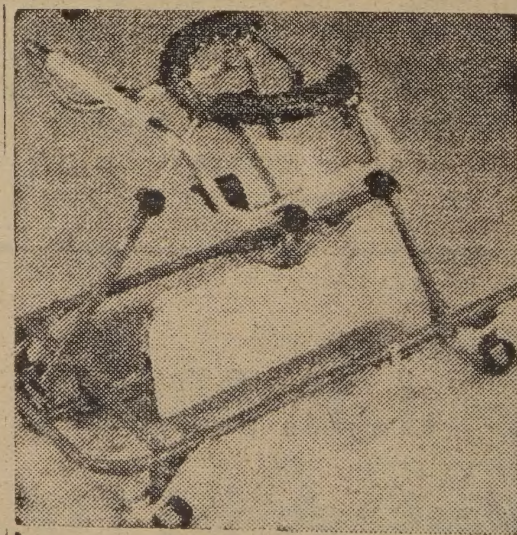
Clive Dunn, who organised the event for the Stars Organisation for Spastics, was responsible for Lot 68, a portrait of Sir John Mills, the retiring chairman of SOS. Clive not only painted the portrait, he sold it for £110, while Anthony Quayle, who took over as this year's chairman of SOS, auctioned an artist's proof of himself as King Lear, drawn by cartoonist Ralph Steadman, which fetched £105.

Society's music

A DISTINGUISHED audience attended the Spastics Society's second charity concert at the Albert Hall on June 16. They were welcomed by

They were welcomed by the Society's chairman, Mr Dorrien Belson.

Over 2,500 people heard the music of Berlioz, Rachmaninov and Walton performed by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, conductor Simon Rattle.



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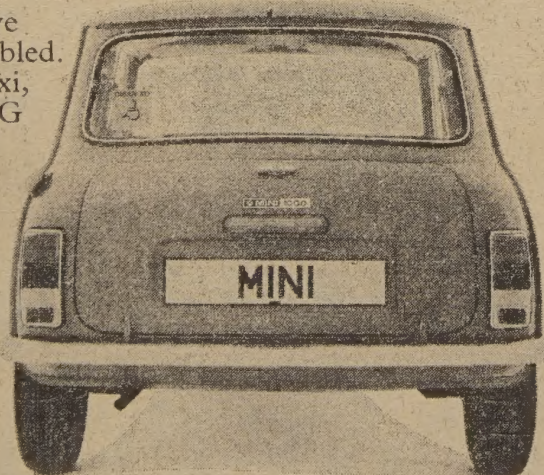
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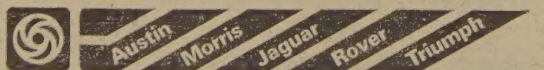
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People and places in the news



LATEST new subscriber to join the many existing readers of **Spastics News** is 35-year-old Bernard Mills from Bolton. Bernard typed his letter ordering **Spastics News** on his new Possum machine, which was a gift from three local charities, Bolton Lions, Midas, and Bolton Moors Round Table, which together chipped in with more than £300 to add to the £250 pro-

vided by the Possum Users Association. There was also a gift from Bernard's employer, St Regis Newspapers.

Bernard is well known to people in Bolton as the man who sells the Evening News from his wheelchair in the town centre precinct. He is now planning to enrol for an Open University degree course starting next February.



A CHEQUE for £300 has been donated to the Society's 'Save a Baby' campaign as a result of Trinity College, Carmarthen's 'rag' appeal. Picture shows, left to

right: Mark Middlemiss, the 'rag' chairman, Mrs Moi Pritchard, the Society's appeals officer in Wales, and Eirian Hopkins, a committee member, holding the cheque



THE multi-talented Richard Stilgoe, enthralled a capacity audience at Bath's College theatre

when he put on a one-man show in aid of the Society's 'Save a Baby' campaign.

Richard, who hit the high note of national recognition through appearing on BBC TV's 'Nationwide' programme, enchanted people with his sparkling humorous repertoire and skilled performance at the piano. Not only was the concert a sell-out, but he also waived his performance fee and the event raised over £750 for the campaign. Picture shows Richard Stilgoe signing the campaign petition after his show, organised by Dawn Hooper of the Bath and District Spastics Group.



Above:

WHEN Mrs Turner, from Wollaton, Nottingham, bought a 'Save a Baby' lottery ticket at an exhibition in Nottingham, little did she realise she was soon to become a lucky £1,000 Jackpot winner as a result.

Mrs Turner was presented with her cheque by the Duke of Rutland while Clive Dunne from 'Dad's Army' looks on. The occasion was a special evening at Isabella's Nightclub, Nottingham, the proceeds of which went towards Rutland House School.



WHEN Mrs W. Carlson from Barnsley retired from her job as supervisor of the Rotherham Road Spastics Centre, where she had

worked for the past 10 years, Pat Taylor (left) presented her with a gift on behalf of staff, attenders and parents. Mr

Carlson was presented with a record and button-hole by Barry Hindmarsh (right).

Picture by the Barnsley Chronicle



Above:

MR F. D. Jones, chairman of Derby and District Spastics Society, presents a cheque for £500 to the Mayor of Derby, Councillor Eric Reid, for the 'Save a Baby' campaign.

Picture by Derby Daily Telegraph



TEENAGE students from The Spastics Society's Dene College, in Kent, pictured on a birdwatching

expedition. Showing the boys the various forms of wildfowl on the Bough Beech reservoir is Mr Mike

Beckwith from the Royal Society for the Preservation of Birds. Picture by

Kent and Sussex Courier



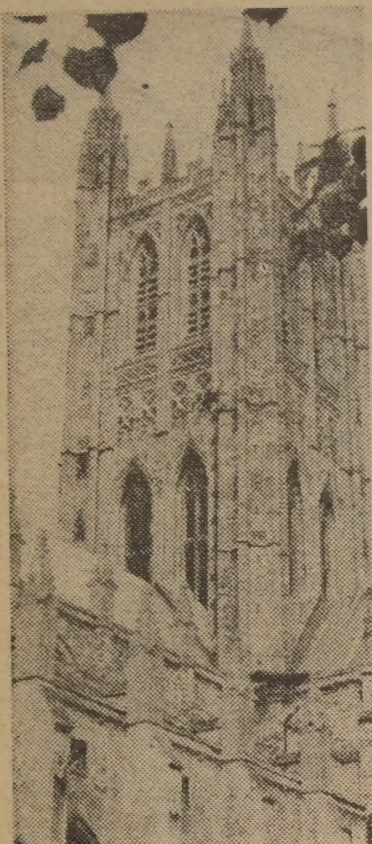
A SPASTICS Society 'Spelling Bee' trophy landed fair and square on Furze Platt Comprehensive School, Maidenhead. Mrs Alysia Hunt, local appeals organiser, presented the pottery bee to

headmaster Mr B. A. J. Edwards, seen here surrounded by some of the pupils who helped raise nearly £400 for the 'Save a Baby' campaign by means of sponsored spelling tests.

Picture by Maidenhead Advertiser

A CHEEKY camera smile from three-year-old David Bailey at the Barrow Hawcoat Lane Spastic and Handicapped Children's Society day centre. The £100 cheque which David is holding was presented by Mrs Christine Blyth, chairman of the Barrow Ladies Circle to Mr F. W. G. Jones, vice-chairman of the Society.

Picture by North Western Evening Mail



THE centuries-old Canterbury Cathedral was the setting for a special Even-song service for the handicapped in June. It was attended by 600 disabled people and their families from all over Kent and the surrounding counties.

The sermon was preached by the Rev Kenneth Mason, Director of Canterbury School of Ministry, and the anthem sung by the choristers of the King's School to a packed congregation.

Penny Griffith, the Society's South East Regional Officer, explained: 'This service was an idea of mine with the local groups and we thought it would be nice. It was an inspiring service in an historic setting for our modern day pilgrims.'



FOR years the Thomas Delarue School has made a practice of accepting exchange students from Keuka College, New York, and this year it was the turn of Margaret Van Heusen, 21, and Deborah Carpenter, 22, who are studying to be special education teachers. Kneeling next to Jane Davies, 17, who leaves the school next year, is Linda Goodine, of the University of Rochester, where she is studying photo-journalism.

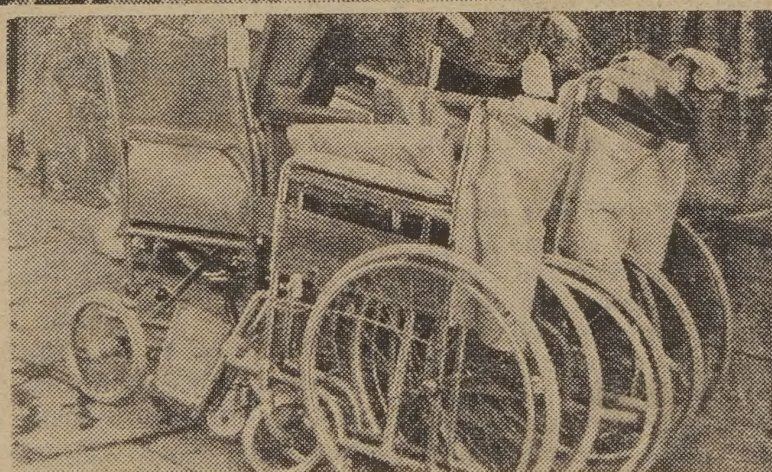
A new Canterbury tale of modern-day pilgrims



PATRICK Devine, a 14-year-old pupil at the Society's Thomas Delarue School, and Dame Anne Bryans, Chairman of the Service Hospitals Welfare Committee, with the Precentor of Canterbury Cathedral before the start of the service. Patrick and Dame Anne read the lessons, and Patrick admitted to feeling a little apprehensive about his role. He comes from Bolton and said: My parents are very pleased for me but it is a long way to travel and they are not here to day.'



A CONTINGENT from the Society's Thomas Delarue School at Tonbridge, Kent.



STACKED wheelchairs were an eloquent reminder to the hundreds of foreign tourists streaming into the premier Cathedral of England of the many kinds of disabilities suffered by the congregation



JENNY Munden is a committee member of the Thanet Group of the Society and was one of the many helpers at the Cathedral helping to make the day a success for those taking part. Jenny's role was behind the counter set up in the Cathedral Cloisters and laden with 600 plates of sandwiches and cake. Members of the Red Cross and St John's Ambulance Brigade were also on hand to assist the disabled.



LIKE all ancient buildings Canterbury Cathedral lacks ease of access for the disabled, but this driver was determined no obstacles would stand in his way, and he navigated his way into the nave quite successfully. There was very little parking for disabled drivers, as access to the Cathedral had to be kept clear, and the toilet facilities were very inadequate.



LEFT: The Sheriff of Canterbury, Coun L. Cottell, chats to Peter Wilcock, Brian Davies, Sarah Fuller, Richard Mason and George Johnson.

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